

# *13 April 2006*

## *Maundy Thursday*

### **READINGS**

Psalm 142; Lamentations 2:10-18; I Cor 10:14-17,11:27-32; Mark 14:12-25

### **DEVOTION**

For most American Soldiers, the road to Iraq passes through Camp Buehring or other similar theater staging areas. Units conduct final training tune-ups, acclimation, and preparation. On the final day in such locations, Brigade or Battalion Commanders often gather their Soldiers for last instructions and focus before entering the combat arena.

In the night before his death, Christ gathered his disciples at a “Camp Buehring,” which was the second floor of a house to celebrate a final evening meal together. During that Last Supper, Jesus gave his disciples final instructions before giving them the reins in carrying out his mission in the world. His instructions could be summed up in one verse; they were to love each other as he had loved them (John 15:12). He had loved them with selfless service and unchanging faithfulness. He had loved them by calling them to share in his purpose of proclaiming God’s love to the whole world. He loved them by forgiving their sins. Ultimately, he was about to love them through his death, paying the price of their sin by his suffering and dying on a cross. It was the greatest demonstration of love possible, laying down one’s life for others.

In order to teach his disciples about the meaning of his death, Jesus took some bread and after blessing it he broke it saying “Take it this is my body.” He then took a cup of wine and gave thanks and offered it to them, saying “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.” He gave the Passover meal a new meaning that evening. By his death on the cross, the Lord Jesus would provide a once-for-all sacrifice for sin. His death would satisfy every demand of a holy God, and it would bring salvation to all who would trust in Him. He would exchange His righteousness for our sin and die the death of a criminal. There is no greater love than this.

Maundy Thursday is the remembrance of the last day at “Camp Buehring” for Jesus and his disciples. The word “Maundy” comes from the Latin for ‘command’ (mandatum). It refers to the command given by Jesus at the Last Supper, that his disciples should love one another. We are reminded of Christ’s love for us in the way that his body was broken and His blood was spilled so that our sins would be forgiven and our hearts and minds cleansed. This day we reflect on the sacrifice Jesus made for us and our own commitment to following Christ and his example. Are we living in total self-interest or are we giving of our time, gifts, and influence in loving others?

**CH (MAJ) Gary Bragg, 4th SB**